

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03

TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01

STR-07 CEA-01 GSA-02 HA-05 HUD-01 AGRE-00 OES-07

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R 111236Z APR 78

FM AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4212

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY BANJUL

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY RABAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 CONAKRY 0716

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PEPR, PINT, PINR, EGEN, GV

SUBJECT: QUARTERLY POLITICAL-ECONOMIC TRENDS (JANUARY-MARCH

1978) -- REPUBLIC OF GUINEA

SUMMARY: SEKOU TOURE'S MODERATE LINE PERSISTED DURING
QUARTER BOTH INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY AND BEGAN TO LOOK
FAIRLY DURABLE, PARTICULARLY AFTER GUINEA'S RECONCILIATION
WITH IVORY COAST AND SENEGAL. TOURE'S NEW-FOUND PRAG-
MATISM STEMS FROM NEED TO PLACATE POPULATION, DIVERSIFY
CONNECTIONS ABROAD, TURN WEST FOR ECONOMIC AID AND INVEST-
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MENT, AND BOLSTER HIS PERSONAL CHARISMA AND GUINEA'S
STANDING ABROAD. SOVIET INFLUENCE CONTINUES TO WANE.
INTERNALLY, MAJOR SYSTEMIC RETREAT FROM TOURE'S RADICAL
SOCIALIST PATTERN IS STILL UNLIKELY, BUT GUINEANS SEEM
CONFIDENT THAT MORE RELAXED APPROACH, PLUS LIKELIHOOD
OF AT LEAST SOME REFORMS, ADD UP TO HOPEFUL PROSPECT.
END SUMMARY.

1. IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TOURE'S SMOOTH RECONCILIATION WITH ERSTWHILE ADVERSARIES HOUPHOUET AND SENGHOR AT MONROVIA SUMMIT EASED LONG-STANDING WEST AFRICAN TENSIONS, PROMISED TO DRAW GUINEA OUT OF SELF-ISOLATION INTO MORE NORMAL COEXISTENCE WITH NEIGHBORS. TOURE'S ASSENT TO RELATIONS WITH SOUTH KOREA BESPOKE NEW WILLINGNESS TO PUT ECONOMIC INTEREST AHEAD OF IDEOLOGY AND DIVERSIFY SOURCES OF AID AND INVESTMENT, AS DID BLOOMING OF WARM RELATIONS WITH MOROCCO. AT QUARTER'S END TOURE, WHO IN LAST 10 YEARS RARELY LEFT GUINEA, APPARENTLY ENVISAGED EXTENSIVE FOREIGN TRAVEL IN ROLE OF ELDER AFRICAN RECONCILER; HIS SECTARIAN REVOLUTIONARY SIDE WAS OVERSHADOWED BY AFRICA-FIRST ECUMENICAL MOOD. TOURE'S PUBLIC DEFENSE OF GUINEA'S UNDERCOVER ATTEMPTS TO MEDIATE AFRICAN DISPUTES WAS MEANT TO COUNTER CRITICISM FROM SOVIETS AND RADICAL AFRICAN REGIMES THAT GOG HAD GONE SOFT ON "ANTI-IMPERIALIST STRUGGLE". OPENLY POLEMICIZING WITH ALGERIA, TOURE JUSTIFIED GOG'S NEUTRALITY ON WESTERN SAHARA, HORN OF AFRICA, AND MIDDLE EAST AS "DISCRETION" REQUIRED BY SECRET DIPLOMACY. GUINEA REMAINS IN AFRICA'S RADICAL/ SOCIALIST CAUCIS, "PROGRESSIVE" FBONT-GROUP ACTIVITY; TOURE MUST RETAIN "REVOLUTIONARY" CREDENTIALS AND RADICAL VOTING IN INTERNATIONAL FORA WILL PROBABLY NOT CHANGE MUCH. YET TREND AWAY FROM DOGMATISM, GATHERING MOMENTUM, IS ENCOURAGING.

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2. GUINEA'S RELATIONS WITH USSR COOLED STILL MORE. SOVIETS SENSED THEIR POSITION EBBING. GOG NOW APPARENTLY WILL BARGAIN HARDER, LOOSEN BONDS GRADUALLY WITHOUT LOSING TOO MANY BENEFITS OR GETTING ANYWHERE NEAR RUPTURE A LA SADAT OR VARRE. GOG ECONOMIC OPENING TO WEST CLEARLY IS STRAINING IDEOLOGICAL KINSHIP GUINEA PROFESSES WITH USSR AND SOCIALIST STATES. TOURE'S WARNING AGAINST OUTSIDE INVOLVEMENT IN HORN OF AFRICA SEEMED AIMED AT SOVIETS AS WELL AS WEST. HIS BAN ON TU-95 RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS THROUGH CONAKRY HOLDS FIRM IN ITS TENTH MONTH. SOVIET AMBASSADOR MUSATOV -- WHO HAS NOT MET WITH SEKOU TOURE FOR OVER EIGHT MONTHS AND WHOM TOURE REPORTEDLY CANNOT ABIDE PERSONALLY--DEPARTS PERMANENTLY THIS MONTH, UNDER CLOUD. SOVIET DEPUTY DEFMIN GORSHKOV'S VISIT TO CONAKRY WAS INCONCLUSIVE: GOG WOULD LIKE ITS OWN NAVAL PORT ON TAMARA ISLAND, COULD ALLOW SOVIET CIVILIANS TO DO JOB, BUT IS EXTREMELY WARY OF LEAVING SOVIETS ANY CLAIM TO "BASE" THERE. GOG'S REQUEST FOR WESTERN PATROL CRAFT NOT ONLY AIMS AT DIVERSIFYING HARDWARE BUT POSSIBLY ALSO AT CUTTING BACK SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE IN CONAKRY (ORIGINALLY PRODUCT OF GUINEAN FEAR OF FOREIGN ATTACK).

BICKERING OVER OBK BAUXITE PRICE CONTINUED, WHILE GOG
REPORTEDLY IS GIVING THOUGHT TO REDUCING NUMBER OF SOVIET
"EXPERTS" IN GUINEA, REPLACING THEM FROM WEST OR THIRD
WORLD.

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4. INTERNAL TREND HAS ALSO FAVORED RELAXATION AFTER
DUST SETTLED ON AUGUST 1977 MARKET RIOTS. DURING QUARTER THERE
WAS NO MORE TALK ABOUT "CLASS WAR" OR "RADICALIZING THE REVO-
LUTION"; GUINEA RETIFIED MAIN INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS
COVENANTS, AND HOSTED A RED CROSS MISSION. GOG NOW PUTS
"WELFARE OF PEOPLE" FIRST. LARGELY DEFUSING POPULAR

ANTAGONISM AGAINST 1975-77 ECONOMIC REPRESSION.
GOG NOW PERMITS HUGE INFLOW OF ILLEGAL CONSUMER
GOODS TO BE HAWKED IN BURGEONING MARKET STALLS THROUGHOUT
GUINEA. ROADBLOCK SHAKEDOWNS HAVE VIRTUALLY CEASED.
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TRAFFIC HAS INCREASED PERHPAS 25 PERCENT IN CONAKRY SINCE NOVEMBER; DURING QUARTER SOME 1000 CARS WERE IMPORTED. GUINEAN EXILES FINALLY BEGAN RETURNING IN CONSIDERABLE NUMBERS. PRIVATE HOUSING STARTS HAVE BOOMED, AS ILLEGAL FOREIGN EXCHANGE BOARDS ARE TAPPED. PRICES AND SYLI BLACK-MARKET CURRENCY RATE HAVE ACTUALLY FALLEN A LITTLE. ALL THIS CONTRADICTS "PEOPLES COMMERCE" DOGMA AND COLLECTIVIZATION WHICH TOURE'S RHETORIC STRESSED IN WAKE OF AUGUST RIOTS. PETTY TRADE STILL HAS NO IDEOLOGICAL SANCTION AND COULD BE ENDED AGAIN BY FIAT. HOWEVER, TOURE HAS LET THINGS SLIDE SO FAR THAT HE CERTAINLY DARES NOT PROVOKE MARKET WOMEN AGAIN. REPORTEDLY, "SOCIALIST" SECTOR MAY AGAIN FEEBLY ASSERT ITSELF IF GOG LICENSES PRL CONSUMER-GOODS MIDDLEMEN TO COMPETE WITH PRIVATE TRADERS, WHO THEMSELVES ARE NOW UNDER PRESSURE FROM LARGE INVENTORIES, FALLING PRICES CAUSED BY INCREASED (MOSTLY ILLEGAL) SUPPLY. MEANWHILE, ECHOES OF LIMITED REVISIONISM ARE HEARD: TOURE ALLEGEDLY ANGRILY TOSSED FILES AT AFRICULTURAL CZAR N'FAMARA KEITA IN FEBRUARY OVER LACK OF RESULTS FROM "SOCIALIST" MODEL. AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION BRIGADES ARE BEING RESTUDIED, MAY EVEN BE DILUTED INTO MOSTLY VOLUNTARY COOPERATIVES DIRECTED BY STATE-SALARIED PROFESSIONALS. FORCING STATE ENTERPRISES TO RUN AT PROFIT, RESTRICTING UNLIMITED CREDIT TO POLITICALLY FAVORED PROJECTS, IS IN WIND. GUINEA IS FURIOUSLY COURTING WESTERN CAPITAL: THIS QUARTER'S NEW PROJECTS INCLUDE HOTELS (FRENCH AND ITALIAN BACKING) AND WATER AND POWER (IBRD); GOG HAS INVITED REYNOLDS ALUMINUM TO INVEST IN AND MANAGE DABOLA BAUXITE MINE, HAS OPENED UP DIAMOND-MINING CONCESSION TO U.S. AND BRITISH-SWISS INTERESTS, AND IS STILL WOOING U.S. STEEL FOR HUGE MIFERGUI-NIMBA IRON-ORE PROJECT. FRG RECENTLY PROPOSED RENEGOTIATION OF DEBTS, OPENING POSSIBILITY OF MORE ACTIVE

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GERMAN ROLE; GOG HOPES ISMAEL TOURE'S TRIP TO CANADA THAWED OTTAWA'S KEPTICISM A BIT OVER CONSTANCY OF GUINEA'S "NEW LOOK".

5. CONCLUSION: WE ARE WITNESSING SOMETHING MORE DURABLE THAN JUST ANOTHER RIGHTWARD ZIG AMONG SEKOU TOURE'S MANY LEFT-RIGHT-LEFT ZAGS. RIOTS WERE NEW ELEMENT, WEST AFRICAN RECONCILIATION ANOTHER, GOG'S INVESTMENT NEEDS VS. IMAGE PROBLEMS A THIRD. TO PRESERVE HIS PERSONAL POWER TOURE HAS OPTED FOR MORE PRAGMATIC BEHAVIOR WHILE

TRYING TO MAINTAIN "SOCIALIST" COLORATION AND AUTHORITY-
TARIAN STRUCTURE AT HOME, IMPROVE GUINEA'S REPUTATION
AND BOLSTER HIS OWN CHARISMA ABROAD. GLARING CONTRA-
DICTION BETWEEN FORMAL ECONOMIC DOGMA AND MARKET TRADING
HE HAS RECENTLY TOLERATED IS UNRESOLVED, MAY REMAIN SO
FOR A TIME. WHILE WE NOTE ONLY MINOR TINKERING SO
FAR, REFORMIST IDEAS--E.G., IBRD-ADVOCATED MONETARY
MEASURES--MAY FIND MORE FERTILE GROUND THAN BEFORE AS
GOG, UNDER POPULAR PRESSURE, IS FORCED TO LOOK FOR NEW
PATHS OUT OF ECONOMIC MORASS.
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